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Sikkema: ‘Time to end the blame game’

Senate Majority Leader says state budget deficits – past and future – are because of conscious decisions to spend more than we can afford

LANSING – Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema today said it is time for the state’s leaders to stop blaming the federal government for state budget deficits, noting that federal funding for Michigan has grown 22 percent since 2000.

“It’s clear there’s a constant need by the governor’s administration to blame someone else for decisions they are making,” said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. “It’s time to stop the blame game.”

Sikkema cited the most recent attempts by the Michigan Department of Transportation to blame their inability to meet road-condition goals on a lack of federal funding as an example of the administration’s “woe is me” attitude.

According to the nonpartisan Senate Fiscal Agency, overall federal revenues have increased from \$9.8 billion in fiscal year 2000 to \$12.6 billion in fiscal year 2005. Expenditures of federal funding by MDOT have increased from \$871.7 million in fiscal year 2000 to more than \$1.1 billion in fiscal year 2005.

“The administration keeps giving the impression there is nothing we can do about the failure to control spending and meet goals,” Sikkema said. “We have the ability to control spending and it’s high time we did it. This isn’t about decisions being made in Washington. This is about decisions being made in Lansing.”

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